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State of South-South cooperation

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/230, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-ninth session a report on the state of South-South cooperation, focusing on how the United Nations development system can improve its support to South-South cooperation and on the implementation of that resolution. Strengthened South-South relations have led many United Nations organizations and agencies, including regional commissions, to incorporate South-South cooperation into their strategic plans and performance indicators. The report contains recommendations on improving the system-wide governance, focus, coherence and coordination of South-South cooperation, in order to maximize its development impact.

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I. Introduction

1. In 2012, developing countries accounted for nearly half of world gross domestic product; by 2020, just three of them — Brazil, China and India — are projected to account for more world output than Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America combined. By 2025, the South is likely to account for 600 million households with incomes of over $20,000 and an overall annual consumption of $30 trillion. All regions of the South have experienced growth and they have done so during the most severe recession in the North since the Great Depression. Those unprecedented achievements and prospects, in combination with the rapid spread of electronic connectivity across the South, point to a new strength and effectiveness for South-South cooperation.

2. South-South development cooperation has become a central factor in international relations. It underpins the growing trade and foreign direct investment (FDI) flows among developing countries that have been transforming the world economy. Since the period 2008-2009, developing countries have exported more to one another than to developed countries and, since 2011, their total trade has been over $4 trillion.[1] Investment flows to developing economies, much of it originating from the South, reached a new high of $759 billion in 2013, accounting for 52 per cent of global FDI inflows; developing Asia is now the recipient of the most FDI in the world.[2]

3. In 2011, the value of South-South cooperation was estimated at between $16.1 billion and $19 billion (E/2014/77, para. 44). The real value is surely higher, not only because much South-South development cooperation is unreported but also because it takes many forms, some of which are hard to quantify. Driven by official as well as private initiatives, it involves a wide diversity of partners, ranging from Governments and international agencies to corporations, civil society organizations and networks acting to protect the disempowered, including women, children and slum dwellers. Infrastructure projects account for an estimated 55 per cent of South-South cooperation and over a third of such cooperation supports social sectors (ibid., para. 46).

4. South-South cooperation is facing a paradigm shift that is driven not only by the increased importance of developing countries to the world economy but also by global demographic and other trends, including the new social connectivity brought about by information and communications technologies, the expanding middle class and rapid urbanization, against the backdrop of the adverse impact that violent conflict and criminality have on development. All those factors define the need for and role of South-South cooperation in the post-2015 development agenda, which is aimed at the elimination of poverty and the fostering of environmentally sustainable growth. Those imperatives are tightly interrelated and demand an integrated, strengthened response from the United Nations system.

5. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes have moved to strengthen their own capacities to support South-South cooperation and to mainstream it in their policies, strategies and programmes. However, they also need improved

[1] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *South-South Trade Monitor*, No. 2 (Geneva, July 2013).

[2] UNCTAD, *Global Investment Trends Monitor*, No. 15 (Geneva, 28 January 2014).

coordination and greater financial support, which must come from both traditional sources and new public and private actors.

6. In that context, the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation was upgraded to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation in 2013; its head was made Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation in May 2014. Recommendations on how the Office can be further strengthened in order to achieve its potential were set out in the Secretary-General's report on the subject (SSC/18/3); the report also referred to the commitment of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to continue hosting the Office.

II. Purpose of strengthening United Nations system support for South-South cooperation

7. Support for South-South cooperation by the United Nations system responds to a wide range of needs expressed by Member States in various intergovernmental decisions and resolutions. The principles and agenda of such cooperation have to be set by countries of the South (see resolution 64/222, annex, para. 11). In particular, Member States have requested the United Nations system to help developing countries establish or strengthen South-South centres of excellence, within their respective areas of competence, and to enhance closer cooperation among such centres, especially at the regional and interregional levels, with a view to improving South-South knowledge-sharing, networking, mutual capacity-building, exchanges of information and best practices, policy analysis and coordinated action among developing countries on major issues or concerns.[3]

8. In the years following the 2009 High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, expressions of commitment to South-South cooperation have come from an increasing number of stakeholders, for example during recent sessions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and other intergovernmental processes.

9. The Group of 77 and China has continued to articulate the common positions of the South in major multilateral conferences and processes dealing with an array of socioeconomic matters. At its 2013 ministerial meeting, it reaffirmed the importance of strengthening South-South cooperation as a strategy to sustain the development efforts of developing countries and as a means of enhancing their participation in the global economy. At the meeting of the High-level Panel of Eminent Personalities of the South held in Fiji in May 2013, recommendations were made on the future landscape of South-South cooperation as an important contribution to the Development Platform for the South. Furthermore, at the Group of 77 and China summit held in the Plurinational State of Bolivia in June 2014, the Group expressed a strong commitment to working collectively to reduce poverty and inequality, fostering sustainable development, protecting sovereignty over natural resources and promoting fair trade while reiterating the importance of South-South cooperation in such development efforts.

[3] As noted in the note by the Secretary-General on the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/17/3), those requests are reiterated in many United Nations decisions and resolutions, including the Nairobi outcome document (resolution 64/222, annex).

10. In addition to efforts to bolster the voice of the South in global governance systems and processes, collaborative frameworks led by countries such as Brazil, China and India are at the heart of the implementation of various South-South programmes in areas such as infrastructure development, agriculture, education, food, the transfer of technology, security and many other sectors at the national and regional levels that are critical for the realization of national and internationally agreed development goals in the South. (For additional information on recent South-South initiatives, see SSC/18/1.)

11. For its part, the United Nations system recognizes the opportunity to leverage the growing commitment to South-South cooperation for development purposes. Evaluation findings also indicate that the United Nations system is well positioned to help strengthen collaborative relations among developing countries, owing to its convening power, global reach, country presence, technical expertise and impartiality.

III. State of United Nations support to South-South cooperation

A. Policy frameworks and strategies

12. The United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries held in Buenos Aires in 1978 provided the first strategic aims and global framework for South-South cooperation. In recent years, United Nations support to South-South cooperation has been guided mainly by the following: (a) the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation; (b) the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit following its 2011 review of South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/3); (c) the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation; and (d) General Assembly resolution 67/226, on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

13. A survey of United Nations organizations, funds and programmes conducted recently by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation found that many of them are implementing the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation and that they are also responding to key recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit. The framework sets out comprehensive parameters on how to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation in the policies and programmes of the United Nations system at all levels, as called for in the Nairobi outcome document and relevant decisions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and resolutions of the General Assembly.

14. The above-mentioned Joint Inspection Unit review, which led to the formulation of the framework of operational guidelines, concluded that in order for South-South and triangular cooperation to have their intended impact, improvements were needed to the overall system-wide policy frameworks, governance, coordination, structures, mechanisms and dedicated resources. Some specific actions recommended by the Joint Inspection Unit to help bolster the mainstreaming of South-South cooperation in United Nations policies and programmes were: (a) working with a common definition; (b) setting up intra-agency support

structures, such as a dedicated South-South and triangular cooperation unit in each agency and focal points at all levels; (c) systematically applying guidelines and guidance; (d) systematically using reporting mechanisms; (e) ensuring, where appropriate, adequate funding from agency budgets; (f) taking effective action at the regional level; (g) matching resources to the United Nations mandates regarding South-South cooperation; (h) developing a coherent strategy for triangular cooperation; and (i) strengthening coordination at the regional and country levels.

15. Support of the United Nations system to South-South cooperation is partly discernible in the status of its actions in response to the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit. Recommendations 1 and 2 were implemented at the time of formulating the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation, which included definitions of South-South and triangular cooperation. The establishment of the structures, mechanisms and focal points called for in recommendation 3 is among the Secretary-General's proposed measures for strengthening inter-agency coordination of South-South cooperation, and the new commitments to implement them are outlined in paragraph 60 below.

16. The need to improve the inclusiveness and working arrangements of the High-level Committee and its secretariat, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, was underscored in recommendation 4. The Secretary-General proposed ways to strengthen the Office in his report on the subject (SSC/18/3); however, actions to improve the inclusiveness and workings of the Committee will require changes to the Committee rules of procedure by the Committee itself. Recommendation 5, on the need for the Office to continue fulfilling its mandate, is being implemented through the Office's strategic framework for the period 2014-2017. Recommendation 6, on the relocation of staff of the Office in UNDP regional centres to the regional commissions, was not implemented. In a related note to the General Assembly (A/66/717/Add.1), the Secretary-General observed that such a relocation would deprive UNDP and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation of the human resources that they need in order to provide more direct support to South-South regional initiatives, as called for in the Nairobi outcome document.

17. Recommendation 7, concerning the need for the High-level Committee to clarify the reporting lines of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as a separate entity within UNDP and on effecting the closer integration of the Office into the UNDP structure, has been largely addressed through the measures proposed by the Secretary-General in his report on how to further strengthen the Office. Evidence suggests that recommendation 8, on the Economic and Social Council requesting the regional commissions to set up strategies and structures and to mobilize resources to advance subregional, regional and interregional South-South cooperation, is gradually being implemented.

18. With regard to recommendation 9 (that United Nations organizations and agencies should allocate no less that 0.5 per cent of their core budgets to the promotion of South-South cooperation), the consensus among agencies was that more than 0.5 per cent of their technical cooperation funds was apportioned to regional programmes that are expected to cover South-South cooperation to a large extent. Recommendation 10, concerning strategies and funding mechanisms to promote South-South and triangular cooperation, is being implemented through the

strategic framework of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. In keeping with recommendation 11, many agencies are establishing mechanisms to monitor, evaluate and report on their South-South cooperation activities. The measures to include South-South cooperation in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks are outlined in the framework of operational guidelines and those to include South-South cooperation in the agendas of various coordination mechanisms at all levels, in accordance with recommendation 12, are highlighted in the present report, in response to the recommendations recently put forward by the Secretary-General in his report on measures to further strengthen the Office.

19. In its resolution 67/226, on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, the General Assembly called on the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system to mainstream support to South-South and triangular cooperation and to strengthen support mechanisms at the global and regional levels. It also requested the United Nations development system to intensify its information-sharing and reporting on and evaluation of support to and results achieved through South-South and triangular cooperation. United Nations organizations and agencies are actively implementing elements of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review relating to South-South and triangular cooperation. Many, including UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Food Programme (WFP), have integrated South-South cooperation into their strategic plans. Further information on the resulting implementation efforts is provided below.

B. Nature of United Nations system support to South-South cooperation

20. United Nations system support to South-South cooperation is most easily described in terms of the thematic focus of each entity, but to see its interconnected nature, a better perspective is that of key functions, such as policy development and dialogue, research and analysis, knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, partnerships and financing and monitoring and evaluation, in keeping with the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation and the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit. All United Nations system entities undertake those functions to some degree; significant and illustrative examples are provided below.

Policy development and dialogue

21. A number of entities in the United Nations system contribute to the shaping of national, regional or international policies and strategies for South-South cooperation; not all engage in policy dialogue with Governments. Among those that do, UNDP plays a leading role, as host of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, which serves as the secretariat of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the primary policymaking entity on South-South cooperation in the United Nations system. With UNDP support that includes meeting staff costs, the Office prepares numerous reports that inform the deliberations and policy guidance provided to the United Nations system on South-South and triangular cooperation by the High-level Committee and the General Assembly.

22. UNDP, which has placed South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation at the core of its strategic plan for the period 2014-2017, has global policy centres in

Brazil, Kenya, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Turkey to facilitate South-South policy coordination and other interactions, as well as initiatives under seven strategic partnership agreements (with Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey). UNDP, in partnership with Turkey, promoted policy dialogue by organizing a multi-stakeholder conference on international development cooperation, which was held in Istanbul on 19 and 20 June 2014, to examine, among other issues, the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in accelerating development progress and improving the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable people around the world. At another UNDP-supported conference, held in Beijing, representatives of 11 middle-income countries[4] shared their experiences of planning and implementing development cooperation. A follow-up proposal aims to create a network of Southern think tanks.

23. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) promotes a continuing dialogue process, with the strategic aims of ending hunger, improving food security and advancing the sustainable use of new technologies. It does so through a number of initiatives that seek to influence policymakers, spread knowledge and provide technical expertise. In the review period, an important policy-related initiative was the interregional meeting held in Addis Ababa from 29 June to 1 July 2013 on the Renewed Partnership for a Unified Approach to End Hunger in Africa by 2025 within the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. Jointly organized with the African Union and the Lula Institute of Brazil, participants discussed best practices in Africa, Asia and Latin America and adopted a declaration and a roadmap for partnership-building, South-South cooperation and resource mobilization. An FAO workshop held in Urumqi, China, from 4 to 8 June 2012 sought to promote regional cooperation for responsible aquaculture and fisheries development in the Central Asian and Caucasian countries.

24. International Labour Organization (ILO) involvement in South-South cooperation policy dialogue is shaped by its Decent Work Agenda, in the context of sustainable development. A characteristic activity was the International Research Conference on Assessing Green Jobs for Evidence-Based Policymaking held at ILO headquarters in Geneva on 9 and 10 December 2013. Participants considered recent national green jobs assessments and discussed how to improve the capacity of national partners to promote South-South and triangular cooperation on formulating relevant evidence-based policies. Among the participants were researchers from developing countries who had been provided with ILO scholarships that covered the costs of attendance.

25. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has been involved in policy dialogues through two significant events. One was the session on "South-South industrial cooperation: the role of southern enterprises in least developed countries" held during the Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference in Lima on 30 November and 1 December 2013. At that event, the need for further research on the topic and the role of Southern enterprises, as the backbone of and main actors in a large share of South-South economic cooperation and development outcomes, were emphasized. The other was a side event on South-South industrial cooperation for African industrialization at a meeting of the

[4] Brazil, China, Czech Republic, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Qatar, Russian Federation, Thailand, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

Conference of African Ministers of Industry. The role of South-South industrial cooperation as an important element in African industrialization was stressed in the ministerial declaration adopted at the conclusion of the conference.

26. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), with its technical focus as overseer of the international patent regime, has been induced to engage in South-South cooperation by the impact of rapid technological change that has made patent law increasingly relevant to development. During the period under review, WIPO, in cooperation with the Government of Brazil, convened the first interregional meeting on South-South cooperation on intellectual property governance issues; the second interregional meeting was organized in cooperation with the Government of Egypt. At those meetings, participants from 32 developing countries from all around the world discussed a wide range of intellectual property issues with representatives of developed countries, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society. A particular focus was placed on how to strengthen the institutional structure for South-South cooperation within WIPO and how to foster networking and matchmaking between developed countries and the least developed countries on particular intellectual property issues.

27. Much of the work of UNEP aims at raising awareness of and developing policy responses to the multiple threats facing the global ecosystem centres on regional realities, and therefore has a South-South focus. That is especially true for protecting regional seas and combating desertification. A particularly notable achievement was the four-year effort that resulted in the adoption of the Multi-Year Plan of Action for South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

28. In 2013, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) supported the Government of Sri Lanka in hosting a regional dialogue in Sri Lanka, at which minimum terms for a standardized employment contract for migrant domestic workers were discussed. The meeting built on earlier dialogue that took place during a workshop at the meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development held in 2012. Participants reviewed and made recommendations for a draft standardized contract for women migrant domestic workers. Those recommendations have contributed to the successful development of a memorandum of understanding between India and Saudi Arabia, which better secures the rights of women migrant workers, specifically domestic workers.

Research and analysis

29. The research findings and related analytical work of the United Nations system are critically important, as they contribute to government policies. They will also play a key part in shaping the role of South-South cooperation in the formulation and implementation of the transformative post-2015 development agenda.

30. The phenomenal rise of the South and the surge in South-South cooperation were the subjects of rigorous research and analysis in the UNDP *Human Development Report 2013*, in which the shifts in global economic relations and their implications for human development were examined. Similar analysis was also conducted by the United Nations system task team on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda for its report *A Renewed Global Partnership for Development 2013*. Other recent policy studies by UNDP covering, among others things, green

jobs, illicit financial flows and development financing address important issues relating to South-South cooperation. Support by UNDP has also enabled the continued publication of the *Sharing Innovative Experiences* series by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the publication of *Creative Economy Report 2013* and issues of *Southern Innovator* magazine.

31. The periodic analytical reports of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) have been a primary guide for policymakers in developing countries, especially with regard to regional and thematic trends that define South-South issues. Two recent examples illustrate that role: in the 2013 edition of its flagship publication *Trade and Development Report*, UNCTAD made the case that South-South trade has a major role in resetting unsustainable patterns of global production and consumption, and in *Trade and Environment Review 2013*, UNCTAD urged a global shift towards small-scale organic agriculture. UNCTAD reports on the least developed and landlocked developing countries have shaped their long-term plans of action, and its monitoring of African issues has been a key contribution to regional policy. The recommendations for policymakers set forth in Economic Development in Africa Report 2013: *Intra-African Trade Unlocking Private Sector Dynamism* contributed to the African Union action plan to boost intra-African trade, which currently lags behind that of other regions. Through its annual report South-South Trade Monitor, UNCTAD provides more robust data and analysis on trends in South-South trade flows.

32. Most of the research activities of specialized agencies are built into their partnership networks. This is the case with the World Health Organization, which has always worked through a network of collaborating institutions (now over 800) to monitor and share information on health threats. UNEP is another hub for networked research that has made an invaluable contribution. An example of its cutting-edge research is the report *South-South Trade in Renewable Energy: A Trade Flow Analysis of Selected Environmental Goods*. Released at the first United Nations Environment Assembly in June 2014, the report not only places a key issue in sustainable development — the use of renewable energy — in the context of increasing South-South trade but also underlines its impact on inclusive growth and job creation. As developing countries take advantage of decreasing technology prices, especially in the use of solar energy, trade among them in renewable energy goods and services is growing faster than global and North-South trade. Also in the report is information on other small and dynamic emerging markets in water treatment equipment and water supply, the market for which is valued at $50 billion globally. Notably, the report calls for increased South-South cooperation, especially at the interregional level, on producing low-cost environmental goods. That will need supportive trade policies and training programmes to create the necessary skilled labour force.

33. The regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council are important fonts of research on the socioeconomic issues facing their member States, as discussed in subsection C below.

Knowledge-sharing

34. The ILO Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training is a knowledge hub intended to improve regional labour conditions and combat abuses such as child labour; it is now a predominantly South-South

e-platform with a global reach. UNEP, with its South-South Cooperation Exchange Mechanism, an e-platform to share knowledge, best practices, information and news that was launched in 2012, is bringing South-South cooperation into the information age.

35. Since 2010, the World Tourism Organization, in collaboration with the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa, has been implementing a programme to develop and strengthen the national systems on tourism statistics for the 14 member States of the regional organization. A reliable and efficient system of tourism and tourism-related statistics is fundamental when establishing the research-based policies, planning, marketing and promotion needed for a competitive and sustainable tourism industry. The objective of the project is to assess the tourism statistical systems of the member States of the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa and to bring the systems in line with international best practices. The project also enables the member States to conduct joint planning and to promote their tourism industries through strengthened regional collaboration.

36. Recognition of the difficulties of establishing and maintaining a web-based knowledge hub led Indonesia, in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency, UNDP and the World Bank, to organize a high-level meeting of practitioners that was held in 2012. Over 300 participants from 46 countries met in Bali, and many remained in contact through a World Bank-hosted community of practice that has some 250 members and an e-mail distribution list of over 1,000. A second high-level meeting on knowledge hubs was held in June 2014 in the Republic of Korea. The World Bank South-South Experience Exchange Facility has been funding specific knowledge-sharing initiatives among low-income countries. It has also published case studies highlighting drivers of success in knowledge-sharing.[5]

37. UNDP has declared its commitment to becoming a knowledge broker, through helping to identify, share and adapt scalable and tested Southern solutions. Teamworks, a UNDP online platform, facilitates numerous e-discussions and includes South-South exchanges of knowledge and experience on a wide range of topics among staff across the world. The UNDP-supported Caribbean Risk Management Initiative facilitates knowledge-sharing between small island developing States in the Caribbean and the Asia-Pacific region with regard to the management and mitigation of climate-related risks, including hurricanes and rising sea levels. At the UNDP-supported China-Africa Poverty Reduction and Development Conference, held in Hangzhou, China, in July 2013, the issue of what small and medium-sized enterprises could do to create youth employment was considered. That organizational culture of knowledge-sharing has laid the ground for UNDP to better serve as a knowledge broker for South-South cooperation.

Capacity development

38. The primary focus of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries held in 1978, was on building the institutional capacity of developing countries to

[5] Shobha Kumar and Aaron Leonard, *The Art of Knowledge Exchange: A Results-Focused Planning Guide for Development Practitioners* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2011).

strengthen national and collective self-reliance, and the United Nations system has been an essential source of support in that effort.

39. Numerous UNDP initiatives offer practical capacity-development support to countries, for example by promoting the capacity of the least developed countries to engage in trade, attract investment and participate in production networks and value chains serving growing markets throughout the global South. During a side event at the Development Cooperation Forum of the Economic and Social Council held in New York on 5 and 6 July 2012, and more recently at the conference on international development cooperation supported by UNDP and the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, heads of development agencies discussed their capacity-development needs, which are often met through UNDP support for institution-building in the South.

40. Among other notable initiatives is the International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre for South-South Cooperation in Malaysia, which is sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and focuses on capacity-building in developing countries in three critical and interrelated areas, namely the discovery of new knowledge (science), its application (technology) and its uses (innovation). The Centre is part of a UNESCO network working on the global priorities of the agency and has become a key player in helping to mobilize intellectual resources and highlight best practices in the South. Its work continually opens up further opportunities for South-South cooperation and greater empowerment of the South as a whole. UNIDO South-South cooperation capacity-building initiatives include two operational centres in China and India that disseminate clean technologies for green industry.

41. In November 2011, an innovative partnership between WFP and the Government of Brazil established the WFP Brazil Centre of Excellence against Hunger. It was created to strengthen national capacities and knowledge in Africa, Asia and Latin America to design and implement nationally owned, sustainable school-feeding and other anti-hunger programmes as part of the broader social policy context. WFP is currently exploring the establishment of new centres for the same purpose.

Partnerships and innovative financing

42. Organizations of the United Nations system have formed various partnerships and have established financing mechanisms that have brought many dividends. During the period 2012-2014, FAO has engaged in ongoing interaction with some 50 Southern partners through its Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. Its new South-South cooperation strategy envisions strengthened and broadened partnerships that include triangular arrangements with Governments, research institutions, civil society and the private sector. One example is the FAO collaboration with the Coalition for African Rice Development and the Japan International Cooperation Agency to direct research at universities and specialized institutions in Africa and Asia.

43. A number of the partnership agreements involve provider countries establishing trust funds with FAO. Under a broad trust fund framework agreement with China, five of its agricultural institutes will work with African partners to scale up the impact of South-South cooperation on food security and nutrition; assure quality production of veterinary vaccines; strengthen networking between

agricultural research and training centres in China and Africa; develop aquaculture; and increase the production and use of renewable energy. Other trust fund agreements are with Angola, Chad and Nigeria to provide financial resources to secure Brazilian, Vietnamese and Chinese expertise, respectively. A trust fund agreement with Angola and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation supports FAO services for agricultural research rehabilitation and development. Under a cooperation agreement with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, FAO directs South-South cooperation in the fields of safety, nutrition and food sovereignty and poverty reduction in Latin American and Caribbean countries.

44. WIPO has developed a number of innovative and inclusive partnerships over the years to promote access to knowledge and technology and it will strive to build upon them to further promote South-South cooperation and partnerships in the field of intellectual property. Such initiatives include WIPO GREEN, an interactive online marketplace that promotes innovation and the diffusion of green technologies by connecting a wide range of players — including partners from the South — in the green technology innovation value chain; WIPO Re:Search, an online platform providing access to intellectual property for pharmaceutical compounds, technologies, know-how and data that are available for research and development related to neglected tropical diseases; the Access to Research for Development and Innovation and Access to Specialized Patent Information public-private partnerships, which were developed to facilitate free or low-cost access to research for development and innovation, and to specialized patent information for developing countries, respectively; and the multi-stakeholder Vision IP platform developed to facilitate access to information and cultural content for visually impaired persons.

45. The UNEP-China-Africa Cooperation on the Environment is a three-party partnership and cooperation initiative led and supported by the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology and Chinese scientific research institutes, with facilitation from UNEP. The partnership provides technical support to African countries to scale up a number of solutions that have proven successful in China, such as dry land agriculture and water treatment. UNEP is involved in numerous similar partnerships, including the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, the Global Universities Partnership on Environment for Sustainability and the Global Adaptation Network.

46. Within the framework of the cooperation agreement between ILO and United Cities and Local Governments, action to advance the Decent Work Agenda at the local level through a local economic development approach has been supported. In 2013, ILO and United Cities and Local Governments carried out activities aimed at developing South-South and city-to-city cooperation to reinforce the capacities and business skills of market vendors from Maputo and Durban, South Africa. South-South and triangular cooperation have been recognized as important modalities of the development of city-to-city cooperation, especially in the area of local economic development.

47. Consistent with various decisions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit, a number of agencies have reported that a fixed percentage of their regular budgets has been dedicated to South-South and triangular cooperation. For instance, the total regular budget for the period 2012-2013 for ILO was $861.6 million, of which about $1 million (0.12 per cent) was allocated to South-South and triangular cooperation.

The total extrabudgetary allocation for technical cooperation for the period 2012-2013 was $498.3 million, of which $13.8 million, or 2.78 per cent, was provided by Brazil, China, Kuwait, Panama and the Russian Federation and was allocated to South-South and triangular cooperation. There has been an upward trend in the budget allocation for South-South and triangular cooperation, and it has been increased to $1.5 million in the programme and budget for the period 2014-2015.

48. As a result of the increased awareness at FAO of South-South cooperation as a programming approach, the amounts that are being specifically committed to such cooperation are increasing. In the last two years, the FAO-China Trust Fund has committed $2 million to South-South cooperation, of which $300,000 was spent on the Global South-South Development Expo held in Nairobi from 28 October to 1 November 2013. A second tranche of $2 million, to start in 2014, was allocated. A number of other projects have a strong South-South cooperation component, but the amount spent on South-South cooperation has not yet been calculated.

49. While South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation have yet to be mainstreamed into the programme and budget of WIPO, under its two-year project on South-South cooperation that was implemented during the period 2012-2013, the Organization spent approximately $700,000.

50. Over the years, much of the structured financial support for South-South cooperation from within the United Nations system has come from UNDP and, in the wake of the recent financial crisis, UNDP has adopted a mechanism for the period 2014-2017 that will ensure stable and predictable funding of $3.5 million per year (a total of $14 million) for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. The Office itself plans to raise an additional $20 million (see SSC/18/3). It is expected that Member States will continue providing additional resources to the Office and that the UNDP Administrator, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, will explore means of expanding support using the experience gained from the management of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund. The Office will also have the resources made available by the Group of 77 and China through the UNDP-hosted Pérez Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation. Launched in 1983, the Trust Fund makes an annual sum of $213,000, which is the interest on its core capital of $6 million, available for South-South projects.

Monitoring and evaluation

51. Many United Nations organizations and agencies are responding to calls to assess the impact of their support to South-South and triangular cooperation. UNDP took the lead and evaluated its contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation during the periods 1996-2007 and 2009-2011. The findings of the evaluations and the management responses formed the basis of a clear articulation of South-South cooperation in its strategic plan for 2014-2017 and the corporate strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation that is being developed. In 2012, FAO conducted an internal review of its 15 years of work, which brought to light areas for improvement in its South-South cooperation programme. The WIPO project entitled "Enhancing South-South cooperation on intellectual property and development among developing countries and least developed countries" was assessed by two external independent evaluators during the period January-March 2014. In their evaluation report, dated May 2014, they underlined the relevance of the project and the potential sustainability of results through the further

institutionalization and mainstreaming of South-South cooperation in all WIPO activities.

52. ILO conducted an independent midterm assessment of its partnership programme to prevent and eliminate child labour in the Americas, which has received about $9 million in funding from the Brazilian Cooperation Agency for the period June 2009 to November 2015. The evaluation carried out in 2013 found that visits to exchange experiences between partner countries, when requested, were effective tools for building synergies and they provided opportunities to replicate successful activities.

C. United Nations support for subregional, regional and interregional South-South cooperation

53. Major support structure for South-South cooperation at the regional and subregional levels is provided by the five regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council: the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). As each Commission is closely focused on the developmental concerns of its member States, almost all of their activities, including regular meetings, involve South-South cooperation, which has been fully mainstreamed into their activities. Regional United Nations Development Group teams also have a key role to play in the promotion of South-South cooperation within and across regions.

54. In addition to the research and analysis functions of the regional commissions noted earlier, their primary role is to assist Member States in reaching common positions on major issues. In every region, there are huge economic and social disparities among countries and within societies. Consultations on the post-2015 agenda have shown that closing those gaps is a shared and high-priority concern in every region. Other strongly shared concerns are environmental threats and violent crime. Underlying those similarities in focus are significantly differentiated socioeconomic realities: one of the key messages from the regional commissions for the post-2015 agenda is that despite the many commonalities among the regions, their different circumstances call for a nuanced approach that addresses regional specificities.[6]

55. Each regional commission has been active in supporting regional integration, working in tandem with other similarly oriented organizations. In West Asia, for example, the ESCWA Regional Coordination Mechanism for Arab States is preparing a regional poverty mapping system. In Africa, the task of coordination is currently focused on implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development under the 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union. In the Asia-Pacific region, which has multiple regional and subregional organizations, the task is more complex and not easily summarized. Among the notable examples of regional South-South cooperation is a conference that was held in Dili in February 2013 on the theme "Development for all: Stop conflicts, develop States and

[6] ECE, ESCAP, ECLAC, ECA and ESCWA, *A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda* (E/ESCWA/OES/2013/2).

eradicate poverty". The conference provided an opportunity for the fragile and conflict-affected States in the region to voice their concerns, with the aim of finding a place for them in the post-2015 agenda. ECLAC has too varied an agenda to be easily summed up; illustrative of the difficulty is the number of subregional and regional mechanisms that it supports.[7] The regional organization with the most universal regional membership is the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, with which ECLAC has developed a close supportive relationship. ECE has been fostering the Eurasian integration process through a number of technical cooperation activities in partnership with the Customs Union of the Eurasian Economic Community and the Common Economic Zone.

56. As noted above, United Nations agencies have been increasing support for regional and interregional South-South cooperation in a variety of ways, mainly in the course of their networked knowledge-sharing and on-the-ground technical assistance programmes. The India-Brazil-South Africa Facility for Hunger and Poverty Alleviation (the IBSA Fund) is a unique example of three middle-income countries from three separate regions working through the United Nations system — the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation — to help the least developed countries. To date, the IBSA Fund has provided $27 million to fund projects in 13 partner countries. For example, Burundi used IBSA Fund support to establish and run a centre for HIV prevention, testing and treatment that has provided more than 39,000 people with annual consultations.

57. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All is rallying African leaders in Government and the private sector around concrete plans to concertedly address the issue of energy poverty in Africa, where close to 600 million people lack access to electricity and about 800,000 people die prematurely per year as a result of household air pollution. As one third of new oil and gas discoveries in the past five years have been in Africa, and 9 out of 12 such discoveries made in 2012 were made in East and West Africa, the Special Representative has proposed the creation of subregional collaborative frameworks through the establishment of an African energy leaders group within each regional economic community to champion the creation of regional public-private-partnership platforms with the purpose of attracting larger domestic and foreign investments into power generation, distribution and value addition, which in the case of oil and gas would go to the production of fertilizers, plastics and liquefied petroleum gas.[8] The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation is facilitating the establishment of the South-South Energy Initiative, through which Southern countries will identify their needs and take decisions on how to resolve challenges that they face, focusing on the best use of energy resources in today's global context.

[7] The Southern Common Market, the Latin American Integration Association, the Caribbean Community, the Union of South American Nations, the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Central American Integration System and the Andean Community.

[8] Kandeh K. Yumkella, "Africa's new energy bonanza", *African Business*, No. 409 (June 2014).

IV. Inter-agency coordination of United Nations support to South-South cooperation

58. The implementation of decision 18/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, adopted at its eighteenth session, should go a long way to bolstering the mainstreaming and coordination of support to South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system. Inter-agency coordination in support of South-South cooperation happens at the global and regional levels, under the aegis of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the Regional Coordination Mechanism of each regional commission of the Economic and Social Council and United Nations Development Group regional teams. The actual coordination work of the Chief Executives Board takes place in the United Nations Development Group, which is chaired by the Administrator of UNDP, and is a process that is completely integral to the workings of the United Nations system.

59. Hence, in line with decisions of the High-level Committee at its eighteenth session and consistent with the recommendations on ensuring more systematic mainstreaming of South-South cooperation by the United Nations system contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit and in the Secretary-General's report on strengthening the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, the Administrator of UNDP, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, has the following responsibilities: (a) establishing a more formalized and strengthened inter-agency mechanism coordinated by the Office; (b) giving the Office the opportunity to be represented more regularly in the strategic and coordination mechanisms of the United Nations Development Group when matters affecting South-South and triangular cooperation are being discussed; and (c) taking steps to ensure that the Office is adequately staffed, as appropriate, through the secondment of personnel from Governments and other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and through the recruitment of Junior Professional Officers to give additional weight to the system-wide coordination function of the Office.

60. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation would also be strengthened by the speedy appointment of regional staff at the Professional level to the UNDP regional centres, where applicable, with additional measures to further integrate them into regional United Nations Development Group mechanisms. At the country level, the United Nations resident coordinators will be supported by thematic groups (including on South-South and triangular cooperation) or other inter-agency mechanisms so that they may play a leadership role in system-wide coordination. Those arrangements would be supported by workshops, training courses and other initiatives organized by the Office in conjunction with the Development Operations Coordination Office and the United Nations System Staff College to help staff to be effective in mainstreaming South-South cooperation.

61. Together, the above measures augment the commitment of UNDP to continue hosting and supporting the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, while providing it with the means and space to fulfil its role as coordinator of South-South cooperation across the United Nations system.

62. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation has institutionalized and strengthened its multilateral South-South support framework, which comprises the Global South-South Development Academy, the Global South-South

Development Expo and the South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange, which are increasingly utilized by United Nations entities. For instance, UNDP has contributed to the strengthening of the Academy through populating the expert rosters in the Web of Information for Development system in order to promote and utilize Southern expertise. The Academy provides access to more than 13,000 Southern experts, as well as information on over 300 successful experiences in all areas of the Millennium Development Goals.

63. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation has leveraged the competencies of United Nations entities in the organization of its annual Global South-South Development Expo. Every year, more than 30 United Nations entities and other multilateral organizations take part in the Expo. For example, FAO participated in the 2012 and 2013 Expos, as well as in the first regional Expo, which was organized in Doha in 2013; UNEP has been an institutional partner and convener of the six solution exchange forums of the Expo since 2009 and it hosted the 2013 Expo at its headquarters in Nairobi; UNIDO has been actively involved in the Expo and it hosted the 2012 Expo in Vienna; ILO convened the 2010 Expo and organized two solution exchange forums at both the 2012 and 2013 Expos and it is currently working on a publication that brings together all the good practices that have been showcased in all past Expos; WIPO participated in the 2012 and 2013 Expos and has identified good practices to further South-South cooperation in its work; and UNDP continues to collaborate with the Office in organizing the Expos and in 2013 organized a solution exchange forum on poverty reduction and sustainability.

64. UNEP supports the South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange through its South-South Cooperation Exchange Mechanism. In May 2013, UNIDO participated in the eighth South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange Convention, which was held as part of the first China International Technology Fair in Shanghai, China. It also organized a session on South-South industrial cooperation for enhancing food safety in China and chaired a round-table discussion on the theme "Institutionalizing South-South industrial cooperation: experiences and solutions from Southern centres". Similarly, during the 2013 Global South-South Development Expo, a partnership was established between the South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange and WIPO GREEN, an interactive marketplace that promotes innovation and diffusion of green technologies. Since its establishment, the South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange platform has expanded to 49 country centres in 39 countries, resulting in 6,132 projects listed, 1,869 projects matched and 857 projects carried out.

V. South-South and triangular cooperation in the context of the post-2015 development agenda

65. In 2013, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination called upon its subsidiary bodies to jointly develop options on how the United Nations system could best support Member States as the international community strives to transition to a new, universal development agenda centred on sustainable development, including implementation at the country level (see E/2014/69, para. 18).

66. The credibility of the United Nations system will depend on the substance of the post-2015 agenda and on how effectively it is implemented. In addition to taking place in global forums, the substantive discussion on the future development agenda has to a considerable extent been a South-South process at the subregional and regional levels. The emerging contours of the agenda point to strong action to eradicate poverty and change unsustainable patterns of production and consumption. Discussions have highlighted the need for a coherent approach that will integrate and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development within a single framework and for a set of universal goals that galvanize the full range of human aspirations and needs to ensure a life of dignity for all. Such commitment to human solidarity is consistent with the founding principles of South-South cooperation.

67. While most of the discussions on the post-2015 agenda have continued the focus of the Millennium Development Goals on such topics as extreme poverty, health and education, attention to the mobilization of resources needed to implement the future sustainable development goals at the national, regional and global levels is equally important.

68. Those shared development objectives and the means to attain them require the United Nations system to continue supporting inclusive and practical frameworks that would bolster the enhanced contribution of South-South cooperation in areas where it has proven effective, including South-South trade, investment, finance, infrastructure development, regional integration, technical and scientific cooperation, joint research and information-sharing.

69. The soaring interest in South-South cooperation among Member States and the enhanced coordination and coherence of United Nations system support to South-South cooperation over the review period underscore the important role that the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and its institutional host, UNDP, must continue to play in order to maximize the development impact of that form of cooperation.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

70. Owing to the current surge in South-South relations, many of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system are responding to the decisions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, General Assembly resolutions and the Joint Inspection Unit recommendations with regard to South-South cooperation. They have incorporated South-South cooperation into their strategic plans, research agendas, programming instruments, budgets, performance indicators and monitoring and evaluation; such effort should continue with even greater vigour.

71. The need for coherent, effective coordination of such United Nations support to South-South cooperation is greater than ever and should be urgently addressed through the establishment of an inter-agency coordination mechanism and the full implementation of the other measures recently proposed by the Secretary-General to strengthen the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and to integrate its regional staff into the United Nations Development Group regional coordination mechanisms.

72. The mainstreaming of South-South cooperation in the operational work of the United Nations system, currently facilitated by the experimental implementation of the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South

and triangular cooperation, should continue through the development of more guidance tools that are consistent with Member States' perspectives and the mandates of various organizations and agencies of the United Nations system. Equally important is continued access by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and United Nations system South-South cooperation focal points to the UNDP global operations and country office network, United Nations country teams and the United Nations resident coordinator system, under the auspices of UNDP, as host of the Office and Chair of the United Nations Development Group.

73. Progress has been made on the implementation of a number of recommendations emanating from the Joint Inspection Unit report, as well as the 2012 evaluation of UNDP support to South-South cooperation. However, recommendations relating to the workings of the High-level Committee as the key governance structure for South-South cooperation in the United Nations system remain unfulfilled and they should be a priority, starting from consultations with Member States for guidance on updating the Committee's rules of procedure, which were established in 1980.

74. Interest in South-South cooperation continues to soar, driven by the fast-growing economies of the South. However, rates of economic growth have slowed, progress is uneven and the gap between North and South in average per capita income continues to be unacceptably wide. To ensure shared prosperity for all beyond 2015 requires intensified cooperation and the focusing of the support of the United Nations system on areas where South-South cooperation has proven effective, namely policy coordination, regional integration, interregional linkages and the development of national productive capacities through exchanges of knowledge and technological innovations.

75. As a number of developing countries shift towards greater use of energy-efficient technologies,[9] the United Nations system has the opportunity and responsibility to promote South-South transfers of renewable technologies and to forge more multi-stakeholder partnerships that channel public- and private-sector resources towards sustainable enterprises for rural and urban job creation and poverty eradication.

76. South-South cooperation is increasingly critical to bolstering the productive capacities of developing countries and their growth trajectory in a sustainable manner. That calls for increased partnerships involving Governments, civil society, academia, international financial institutions, foundations and the private sector. In Africa, where many countries are not on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations system should accelerate its support to regional communities, enabling their increasing number of resource-rich member countries to build more public-private partnerships and cross-border frameworks, with a view to attracting larger domestic and foreign investments into sustainable power generation, distribution and value addition, thus responding to calls in the Nairobi outcome document for the United Nations system to help to strengthen regional institutions for increased South-South cooperation.

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[9] Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Perspectives on Global Development 2014: Boosting Productivity to Meet the Middle-Income Challenge (Paris, 2014)*.